

# Oregon Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishing

## 2017 - 2018 Directive to Minimize Whale Entanglement Risk



Recommended by the Oregon Whale Entanglement Working Group



NOAMMHSRP A 18786

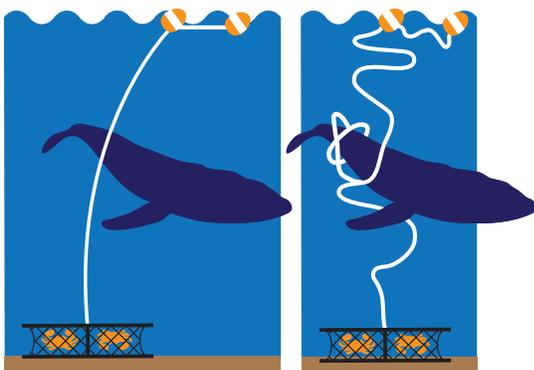
### Reasons for Directives

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has confirmed significant increases in large whale entanglements over the last few years, and specifically in Dungeness crab fishing gear. This situation threatens the stability of the fishery and coastal fishing communities. By using these voluntary best practices, the Oregon Dungeness crab fleet can take an important step towards reducing the risk of whale entanglements.

**The best known way** to reduce risk of whale entanglement is to reduce the amount of gear and line in the water during the spring and summer months, when whales are in the area.

### Best Practices During Crab Season

- Use the minimum amount of scope required to compensate for tides, currents and weather. Whales are more likely to become entangled with slack lines, which can potentially create a "floating snare".
- When changing set location across depths, adjust the length of pot lines by adjusting shots (i.e., measured length of line) to maintain taut vertical lines.
- No excess lines should be floating at the surface. Floating line should only be between the main buoy and trailer buoy(s).
- Remove any fishing gear you are not actively tending during the season.
- Avoid setting gear in the vicinity of whales whenever possible.
- Communicate the locations of high whale activity with other fishermen.



Keep line between pot and main buoy running taut and as vertical as possible.

### Why Report?

Understanding where, when, and how entanglements occur is essential to prevent future entanglements. Timely reporting is critical to facilitate response efforts, when appropriate.

### Report Entangled Whales 1-877-SOS-WHALE



Report entangled whales **IMMEDIATELY** to the NMFS whale entanglement response hotline at 1-877-SOS-WHALE (1-877-767-9425) or hail the U.S. Coast Guard on Channel 16. If possible, stand by.

### Photograph Entangled Whales

**WHALE:** side view of dorsal fin (or hump); flukes (especially if underside is raised); head; any part of the body where gear may be present.

**ENTANGLEMENT:** buoy(s); tags; lines on the body; trailing lines (including distance from whale); netting (if present); other gear if present.  
*Do not approach within 100 yards.*

### Respond Promptly if Contacted

If you are contacted about a whale entangled in your gear, please respond. You can help prevent future entanglements by providing as much information as possible about your fishing gear and practices.



Crab fishing aboard the commercial crab boat Delma Ann



Recovered derelict gear

## Best Practices To Reduce And Recover Derelict Gear

- Maintain gear to ensure lines and buoys are in good working condition and clearly marked consistent with applicable regulation.
- Remove any derelict gear you encounter during the season, consistent with applicable regulation. For more information on Oregon's in-season gear recovery program, contact Kelly Corbett at (541) 867 - 0300, ext 244. Lost gear contributes to marine debris and increases risk of whale entanglements.
- All gear should be clearly marked consistent with applicable regulation. All gear should be maintained so markings are clearly legible to facilitate correct identification of the origins of the gear involved in entanglements.
- Remove all fishing gear by the end of the season when gear is no longer allowed in the water.
- Consider participating in the permitted post-season derelict gear program after the season ends.

*Taking these important, proactive steps will support consumer perceptions of the fleet's sustainability, help to provide continued opportunities to harvest crab and maintain the fleet's access to the resource.*



*If you have suggestions for reducing entanglements in fishing gear, contact:*

Amanda Gladics at Oregon Sea Grant  
[Amanda.Gladics@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Amanda.Gladics@oregonstate.edu)  
(503) 325-8573 ext. 265

The Best Practices Directive was developed by the Oregon Whale Entanglement Working Group

[extension.oregonstate.edu/clatsop/oregon-whale-entanglement-working-group](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/clatsop/oregon-whale-entanglement-working-group)

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